

**James: Lesson #74 – The Christian Facing Trials**  
**Notes For Parents to Study With Their Children**  
**For Wednesday, Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>**

Read James 1:1-20 (a simplified explanation of the text will be supplied at the end of these notes).

**Memory Verse:** James 1:2 “My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials.”

**Rejoicing in Trials**

- The devil uses people and things in life to give us trouble. He would like for us to have so many problems that we get discouraged and give up and quit serving God.
- But what if we took that away from the devil. What if every time we were faced with problems in our life, we made up our minds to rejoice? What if we decided we would be happy in God no matter what problems we had?
- James says that when we go through troubles, we should rejoice. We should rejoice because our faith is being tested. We know how important faith is to a Christian. It is one of the main things we do to be saved. But when trials and problems come our way, they are only a test for our faith.
- When a teacher gives you a homework assignment, later on she may give a test. Why does she give tests? Because she wants to see if you really being a good student. She wants to see if you really know your math or spelling or history.
- Look at it this way: The devil brings trouble into your life to make you want to quit serving God. God allows that same trial to come into your life to test your faith. That’s really what the world trial means, a test. God wants to see if you really have a strong faith. He wants to know if we will be faithful to Him even if it is hard.
- If we go through a trial, and stay faithful to God, we will be blessed. That’s why we can rejoice about a trial, it is an opportunity to be blessed by God. God says we will receive “the crown of life” which is really saying that God will reward us with life in heaven.
- God will never try to pull us into doing something evil. He is only interested in doing what’s best for us and He always gives us the best gifts.

**Do You Need Wisdom?**

- Remember how Solomon, when he first became king in Israel, asked God for wisdom? We can ask God for more wisdom, too.
- What is wisdom? Wisdom must know what to do, but it is more than just knowing, its learning how to do something well. When you first try to learn something new, like a new video game, it’s hard. You can read a book about it, but it takes time to learn what you need to do in each part of the game. Wisdom is kind of like that. You should read the Bible, but then you also have to learn how to apply the Bible to your life to become wiser.
- If you ask God for help and are willing to study and learn His Word, He will always help you become a wise person.

### **Trusting God**

- A Christian has to truly trust the Lord. We must believe that He will help us. Do you know what a double-minded person is? James uses that phrase “a double-minded person.” That’s when we can’t decide what to do. One day we trust God and the next day we don’t. One day we are committed to God and the next day we aren’t.
- If we keep doing that we will be like a car weaving down the road going back and forth between lanes. That’s not very safe. Our lives won’t be stable if we can’t learn to trust God.

### **If You’re Poor**

- There is reason to rejoice. No matter how little you have in life, if you have the Lord you have great wealth. You have the finest and most important thing a person can possess. You are going to inherit heaven. You will have the finest home and be in the most beautiful place and get to be with the most important people in the world. You are a child of God, and most of the richest people in the world can’t say that about themselves.

### **If You’re Rich**

- Be thankful that God has warned you about how riches can destroy us. Most rich people never realize this. But if you have the Lord, His Word has humbled you. He told you that a rich person is like a bloom of a flower. It looks pretty for a while, but just a few days later it is withered up and falls to the ground. God has told you the truth about your riches, so don’t trust them. Trust God instead.

### **What Causes Temptation**

- Do you ever go fishing? To catch a fish you have to hook his mouth. But fish don’t think hooks look very good to eat. So we have to put something on the hook that the fish really wants, like a worm. A worm may not sound good to eat, but a fish really likes it. When you put the worm on, the fish doesn’t even see the hook, he just sees the worm. So the fish bites the worm and ends up getting the hook in his mouth. Then he’s caught.
- The Devil likes to go fishing, too, only he likes to fish for people. He wants to catch people. He needs to hook people with sin, so he makes sin look very good, very fun, very pleasing, but inside those things is a hook. If we sin, he caught us.
- That’s what temptation is like – it’s a dangerous hook covered up by something that really seems like it would be good. But if we go for it, it will hurt us.
- God would never do this too us. This is the Devil’s work, but even the devil can’t succeed if we just remember that the sinful things he offers may look good, but they will hurt us.

### **Simplified Explanation of the Text**

## **James Writes to Jewish Christians**

1:1 James, a servant of God and the Lord Jesus Christ to the Christians from the twelve tribes of Israel who are scattered around the Gentile world: Rejoice!

### **Rejoice During a Trial**

2 My brethren, when you are surrounded by all kinds of trials, think of each of these situations as an opportunity to show a spirit of joy.

3 I'm telling you to be joyous in trials because you know that when your faith is tested, it will work diligently to produce a spirit that stays faithful to God even under difficult situations.

4 Then as you let that ability to endure finish its work in you, you will be mature and all that you should be, needing nothing.

### **Ask God For Wisdom**

5 But if any of you do not have enough wisdom, ask God for it and He will give it to you. When God answers such a prayer for wisdom, He gives to each person in a sincere, unwavering spirit, and He would never insult or condemn someone for making that request.

### **Truly Trust God**

6 But, on our part, we must make sure that we ask in faith, and not be guilty of wavering between trusting God and doubting God; because a person who can't approach God with a settled faith is like the waves of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.

7 People like that should not expect the Lord to give them anything they asked for.

8 Double-minded people are unstable in everything they do.

### **Some Advice to the Poor and the Rich**

9 Now if one of our brothers in Christ has a status in life that is low and humbling, he can take a great deal of joy and pride in his exalted position he has in being a child of God.

10-11 And if a brother is rich, he can rejoice that God has humbled him to know that he too like the bloom of a flower will be passing on to death. As the sun rises with its scorching heat, the grass begins to wither, the flower falls off, and its beautiful appearance will be ruined. In the same way the rich man, with all the things he has going on, will still fade away.

### **Stay Faithful**

12 A person is blessed if, when they go through a trial, they remain faithful in their service to the Lord. After they have shown that they will stay faithful through times of testing, then they will receive the crown of life – a reward the Lord promised to all who love Him.

### **What Causes Temptation**

13 No one who is being tempted should ever say, "I am being tempted by God" because God cannot be tempted by evil and He would never tempt anyone to do evil.

14 Temptation to do evil will happen to every person when they allow themselves to want something that is wrong. This sets a person up for an enticing bait that comes along and draws them away from what is right.

15 Once that improper desire has come together with that enticing bait, it will give birth to a sin, and when sin is finally accomplished it will give birth to death.

16 Don't let yourself be drawn away, my beloved brethren.

### **God Gives Us Good Things**

17 Instead of charging God with the source of your temptation, remember that every good thing given, all the perfect gifts, are from above. They come down from the Father the lights, but with Him there is no changing from His ways, no shifting like the shadows.

18 It was God decision that the Word of Truth cause us to be born so that we would be a kind of first-fruits of God's creation.

19-20 Come to understand this, my beloved brethren.

But let everyone be quick to listen, be slow to speak, be slow to swell with anger, because man's anger can never make them right with God.